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TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY

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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS AT NARCOTICS PRESS CONFERENCE

1. LOU ENTIRE TEXT.

2. COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR FERNANDO GAVIRIA PARTICIPATED IN A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ON NARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORTS IN THE CARIBBEAN AND COLOMBIA ON FEBRUARY 4, 1982. THE CONFERENCE, HELD AT US COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, WAS LED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL SMITH. COAST GUARD COMMANDANT HAYES, DEA ACTING ADMINISTRATOR MULLEN AND CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER VON RAAB ALSO PARTICIPATED.

3. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR INFORMATION ARE INFORMAL NOTES OF QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO AMB. GAVIRIA AND HIS RESPONSES:

- Q. DOES THE GOC CONDONE MARIJUANA SMUGGLING?
- A. NO. THE COLOMBIA SEIZURE FIGURES (4.7 MILLION POUNDS ONCE LATE 1980) SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

- Q. DO YOU ANTICIPATE THE LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA IN COLOMBIA?
- A. NO. PRESIDENT TURBAY'S POSITION IS VERY CLEAR ON THIS.

- Q. IS THE GOC PLANNING ANY CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAMS TO ASSIST MARIJUANA FARMERS?
- A. WE ARE WORKING WITH THE USD ON A STUDY OF SUBSTITUTE CROPS.

- Q. ARE YOU ERADICATING ANY MARIJUANA NOW?
- A. YES. PRESIDENT TURBAY'S GOVERNMENT IS MAKING A GREATER ERADICATION EFFORT THAN ANY OF ITS PREDECESSORS.

- Q. WHAT ECONOMIC IMPACT DOES THIS HAVE ON THE MARIJUANA FARMERS?
- A. I HAVE NO FIGURES ON THAT.

- Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS TO SPRAY HERBICIDES, LIKE PARAQUAT, ON MARIJUANA?

- A. THE GOC IS STUDYING THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF SUCH A PROGRAM. AS YOU KNOW, THE PERCY AMENDMENT WAS ONLY RECENTLY CHANGED TO PERMIT A COOPERATIVE EFFORT WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE WHAT YOU DO ABOUT MARIJUANA IN CALIFORNIA. HAIG

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